change earned from exports during the same year was US $ 22 238 million (Rs. 69,751 crores). Principal commodities imported comprised items such as fertilisers, pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, machinery, coal, coke and briquettes, organic and inorganic chemicals professional instruments and medicine and pharmaceutical products. The principal commodities exported during 1993-94 were plantation crops such as tea & coffee; agriculture & allied products comprising cereals, tobacco, spices, nuts and seeds, oil meals, processed foods, meat & meat preparations, marine products; ores & minerals, leather & manufactures; Gems & jewellery; sports goods; chemicals & related products; engineering goods; project goods; textiles; handicrafts; carpets; cotton raw including waste; and petroleum products.

Visit of Canadian Secretary of State

3116. SHRI HIPHEI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Canadian Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific has visited India in recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof with purpose;

(c) whether he stressed the need for Indo-Canadian Cooperation in trade and business especially in power generation, telecommunications and environmental technology etc;

(d) whether he also indicated that Canada could provide world class technology to India and also invited the Indian industry to invest in Canada to take advantage of the North Ameria Free Trade Agreement to enter the markets of the United States, Mexico and Chils,

(e) whether Government propose to take some initiatives with regard to (c) and (d) to boost exports to new horizons o the world; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Mr. Raymand Chan, Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada visited India from 11th to 16th March 1995 accompanied by a large delegation including 34 representatives of Canadian business houses. Apart from calling on different Ministers in the Govt. of India and holding delegation level discussions with the Indian delegation, Mr. Chan also addressed various Industry Association.

(c) Yes. Sir.

(d) Mr. Chan invited Indian companies to take advantage of increased openings for joint ventures, technology partnerships and direct investments so that Canadian and Indian businesses can successfully penetrate each other's markets and also exploit opportunities in third markets.

(e) and (f) Intensification of private sector business interaction is likely to lead to further expansion of bilateral trade.

Cheaper trade routes to Central Asian Republics

3117. SHRI HIPHEI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to finalise arrangements for opening a cheaper trade route to Central Asian Republics through Bandar Abbas, a sea port in Iran;

(b) if so, the details thereof with objectives;

(c) whether Government also propose to develop an alternative airport for transportation of Indian goods in Central Asian Republics;